BDCP
BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

Welcome

Scoping and Informational Meeting

Bay Delta Conservation Plan

Environmental Impact Report and

Environmental Impact Statement

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BDCP will encompass aquatic ecosystems, natural communities, and may include adjacent riparian and floodplain natural communities within the Statutory Delta

The Statutory Delta

- Includes parts of Yolo, Solano, Contra Costa, San Joaquin, and Sacramento counties
- It may be beneficial to include conservation actions outside the Statutory Delta (with their involvement)

Unique Inland Delta

- Sacramento and San Joaquin river confluence
- Rivers, tributaries, islands, sloughs
- Important breeding and rearing habitat for several species

The Delta Is An Important Area For:

- Fish and wildlife habitat
  - More than 750 species of plants and animals
  - More than 40 Threatened and Endangered species
- Water delivery
  - Drinking water for two-thirds of all Californians
  - Irrigation for more than 500,000 acres of Delta farmland and 2.5 million acres of agriculture in other parts of the state
- State economy
- Agriculture
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Cultural resources
- Energy reserves (gas)

What's Broken in the Delta?

Long standing conflict over how best to use and conserve Delta resources

- Several protected and petitioned fish species are at their lowest population numbers in recorded history
- The Delta has experienced a significant loss of aquatic habitat
- Water operations, toxics, and invasive species negatively impact habitats
- Levees, and the Delta infrastructure they protect, are at risk as lands subside, sea levels rise, and risk increases from looming seismic events
- Water supplies are increasingly unreliable
- Federal courts have ordered the Federal fishery agencies to reconsider what modifications to State and Federal operations are needed to protect fish and have ordered changes in water operations until such reconsideration is complete

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BDCP Study Area

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Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) and Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

What is an NCCP?

- The BDCP is intended to provide the basis for compliance with State law under the NCCP Act and/or California Endangered Species Act
- Developed under State law, an NCCP takes a broad-based ecosystem approach to planning for the protection and perpetuation of biological diversity by providing for the conservation of natural communities
- An NCCP identifies and provides for the protection of plants, animals, and their habitats, while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity
- An NCCP is similar to a Federal HCP, and are often developed in tandem

What is an HCP?

- The BDCP is expected to serve as an HCP that satisfies requirements of the Federal Endangered Species Act, Section 10
- The BDCP is required as part of an application for an incidental take permit under the FESA that allows for the activities covered by the plan which affect those listed species to proceed
- HCPs are designed to minimize and mitigate adverse effects of proposed activities on protected species (plants and animals)
- An HCP is similar to a state NCCP, and are often developed in tandem

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Benefits of Regional Conservation Planning

Conservation Plans

- Allow covered activities to proceed with a comprehensive ecosystem-focused approach that provides for the conservation of affected species and their habitats
- Eliminate more costly, often less effective piecemeal project-by-project, species-by-species permitting
- Prepared by participants proposing to undertake covered activities on a voluntary basis, meaning participants are motivated and dedicated
- Provide an opportunity for a broad range of interested parties to work collaboratively
- Provide flexibility in addressing issues which are most useful for promoting the conservation of covered species
- Based on the best available science
- Developed through an open and public process
- Provide reliable funding sources for ecosystem restoration

Independent Science Advisors

- Required for NCCPs and recommended for HCPs
- Includes independent experts on Covered Species, local ecosystems, and conservation biology
- Limited to scientific issues rather than policy or economic issues
- Issued a report in November 2007
- Involved in providing additional advice as the planning efforts progress

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About the BDCP

The intent of the BDCP is to help restore endangered and sensitive species and their habitats in the Statutory Delta in a way that also will provide for the protection and restoration of water supplies and energy plant operations

The BDCP will:

- Provide the basis for permits under State and Federal endangered species laws for the activities covered by the plan based on the best available science
- Provide a comprehensive habitat conservation and restoration program for the Delta
- Identify sources of funding and new methods of decision-making for ecosystem improvements
- Provide for an adaptive management and monitoring program, enabling the plan to adapt as conditions change and new information emerges
- Streamline permitting for projects covered by the plan

The BDCP will not:

- Solve all environmental challenges in the Delta
- Address all the stressors that may affect covered species (such as ocean conditions)
- Eliminate other permitting requirements
- Affect authority of existing land use jurisdictions

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Covered Species and Activities

Covered Activities*

- Water deliveries, conveyance elements, operational activities, maintenance, and facility improvements of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project
- Operational activities related to water transfers involving water contractors or to serve environmental programs
- Other Delta users' ongoing operations and future Delta related projects (includes Mirant Delta, LLC)
- Conservation measures included in the BDCP, including adaptive habitat management, habitat restoration and enhancement, and monitoring activities

Covered Species*

- Initially, the BDCP will focus on the following aquatic species, but in the future the BDCP will also consider and could broaden to include other species, including terrestrial species
  - Delta smelt
  - Longfin smelt
  - Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook salmon
  - Central Valley Spring-run Chinook salmon
  - Central Valley Fall-run and Late Fall-run Chinook salmon
  - Central Valley steelhead
  - Green sturgeon
  - White sturgeon
  - Sacramento splittail

as identified in the BDCP Planning Agreement

Habitat Restoration and Enhancement

- The types of habitat restoration and enhancement actions which will initially be evaluated for inclusion in the BDCP conservation strategy include:
  - Floodplain restoration
  - Intertidal marsh restoration
  - Channel margin habitat restoration
  - Open-water habitat restoration
  - Non-native species control
  - Improved water flow management (e.g. changes in timing, volume, etc.)
  - Reduction of species entrainment
  - Channel modifications
  - Subsidence reversal where appropriate

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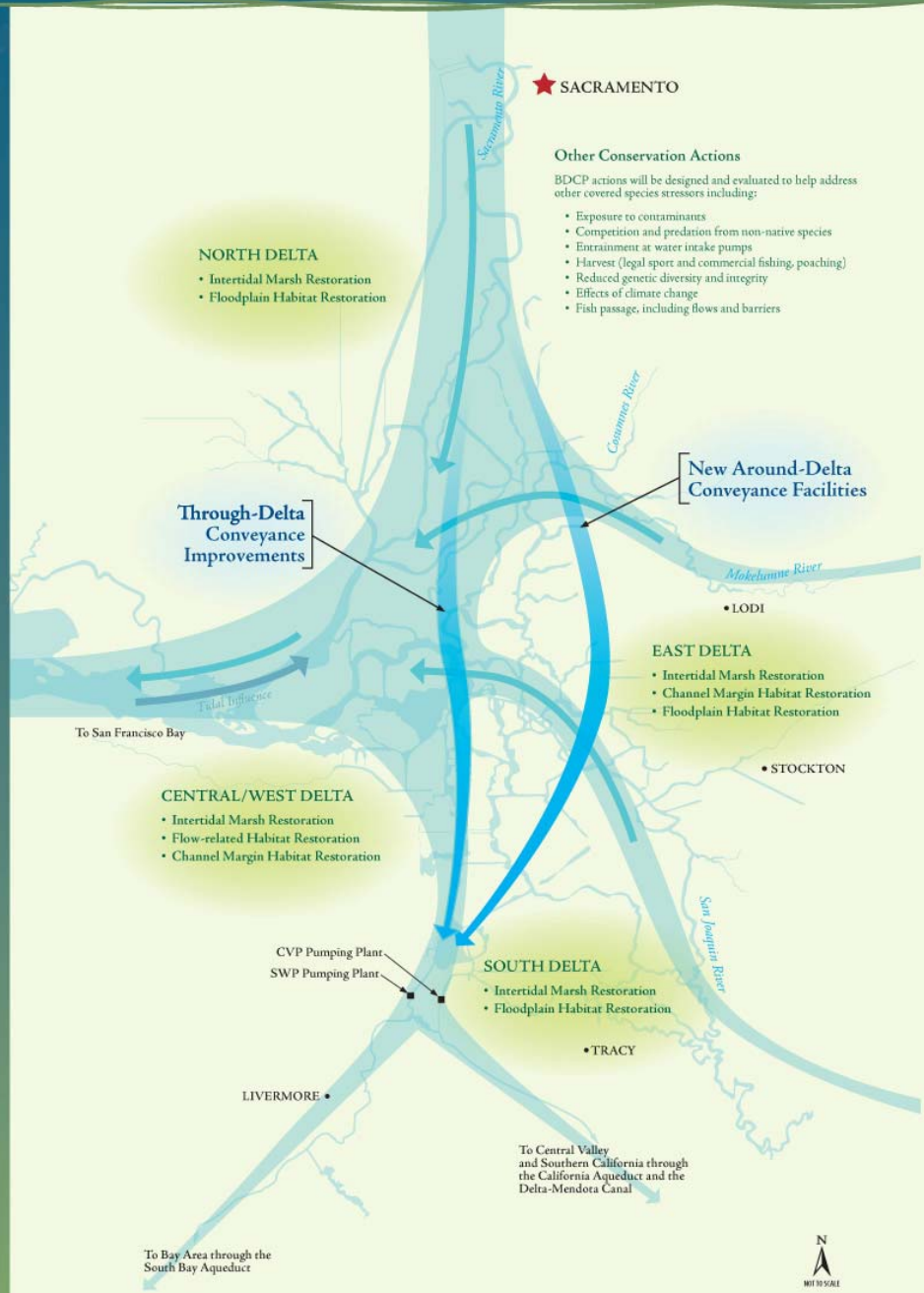
Conservation Concepts



Conservation Concepts

Water Conveyance Facilities

- The BDCP approach to both improve habitat and ensure water supply reliability is to identify a better way to move water through and/or around the Delta to restore a more natural estuarine environment and reduce species entrainment. This may include:
  - New point(s) of water diversion (locations where water is removed from the Delta) and conveyance
  - Changes to the existing facilities used by the State Water Project and Central Valley Project
  - Related design, operational, and institutional arrangements

Other Conservation Actions

- BDCP actions will be designed and evaluated to help address the following stressors on covered species:
  - Exposure to contaminants
  - Competition and predation from non-native species
  - Entrainment at water intake pumps
  - Harvest
  - Reduced genetic diversity and integrity
  - Effects of climate change

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About the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

Purpose of the EIR/EIS

- Fulfill the requirements of the:
  - California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
  - National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Describe proposed action
- Analyze the environmental effects of the proposed action
- For CEQA compliance: Describe the proposed project, identify its significant environmental impacts, and develop reasonable mitigation measures and alternatives to eliminate or reduce such impacts
- For NEPA compliance: Describe reasonable range of alternatives and mitigation that would avoid or minimize adverse impacts or enhance the environment
- Support future regulatory actions or approvals

Purpose of Scoping

The purpose of scoping is to solicit early input from the public and public agencies

- Scoping Issues – Comment Topics
- Extent of the action
- Reasonable range of alternatives
- Methodologies for impact analysis
- Types of impacts to evaluate
- Potential mitigation strategies

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Delta Native Fishes

Delta Smelt
(*Hypomesus transpacificus*)

Longfin Smelt
(*Spirinchus thaleichtys*)

Sacramento Splittail
(*Pogonichthys macrolepidotus*)

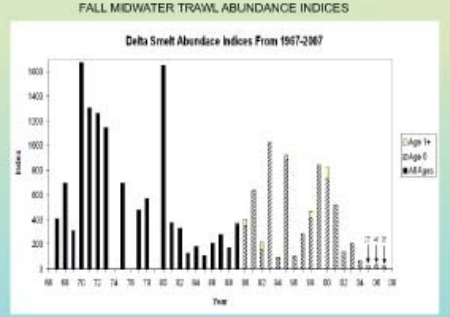
ESA Protected Species Status

- Delta Smelt – Threatened
- Longfin Smelt - Initial finding May 6, 2008 indicated that listing may be warranted. Fish & Wildlife Service to complete final determination by August 2008.
- Sacramento Splittail - Not protected, but numbers are low.

Designated Critical Habitat

- Delta Smelt

FALL MIDWATER TRAWL ABUNDANCE INDICES



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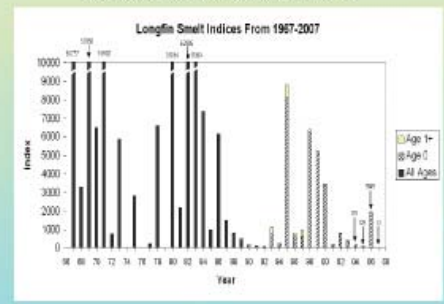

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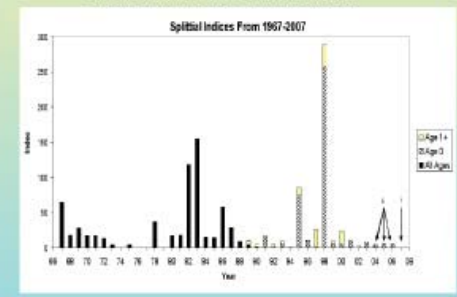

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Anadromous Fishes in the Central Valley

Chinook Salmon
(*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*)

Central Valley Steelhead
(*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)

Green Sturgeon
(*Acipenser medirostris*)

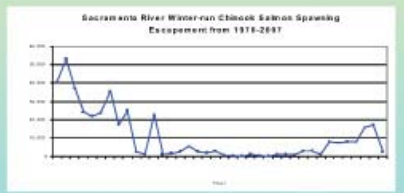
White Sturgeon
(*Acipenser transmontanus*)

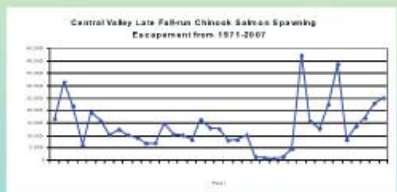
ESA Protected Species Status

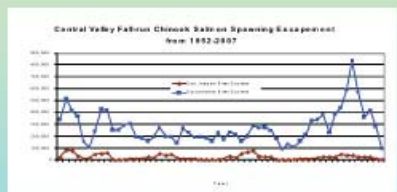
- Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook, Endangered
- Central Valley Spring-run Chinook, Threatened
- Central Valley Late Fall-run Chinook, Species of Concern
- Central Valley Fall-run Chinook, Species of Concern
- Central Valley Steelhead, Threatened
- Green Sturgeon, Threatened
- White Sturgeon, Not listed

Designated Critical Habitat

- Winter-run Chinook salmon
- Spring-run Chinook salmon
- Central Valley Steelhead
- Green Sturgeon, Under Development







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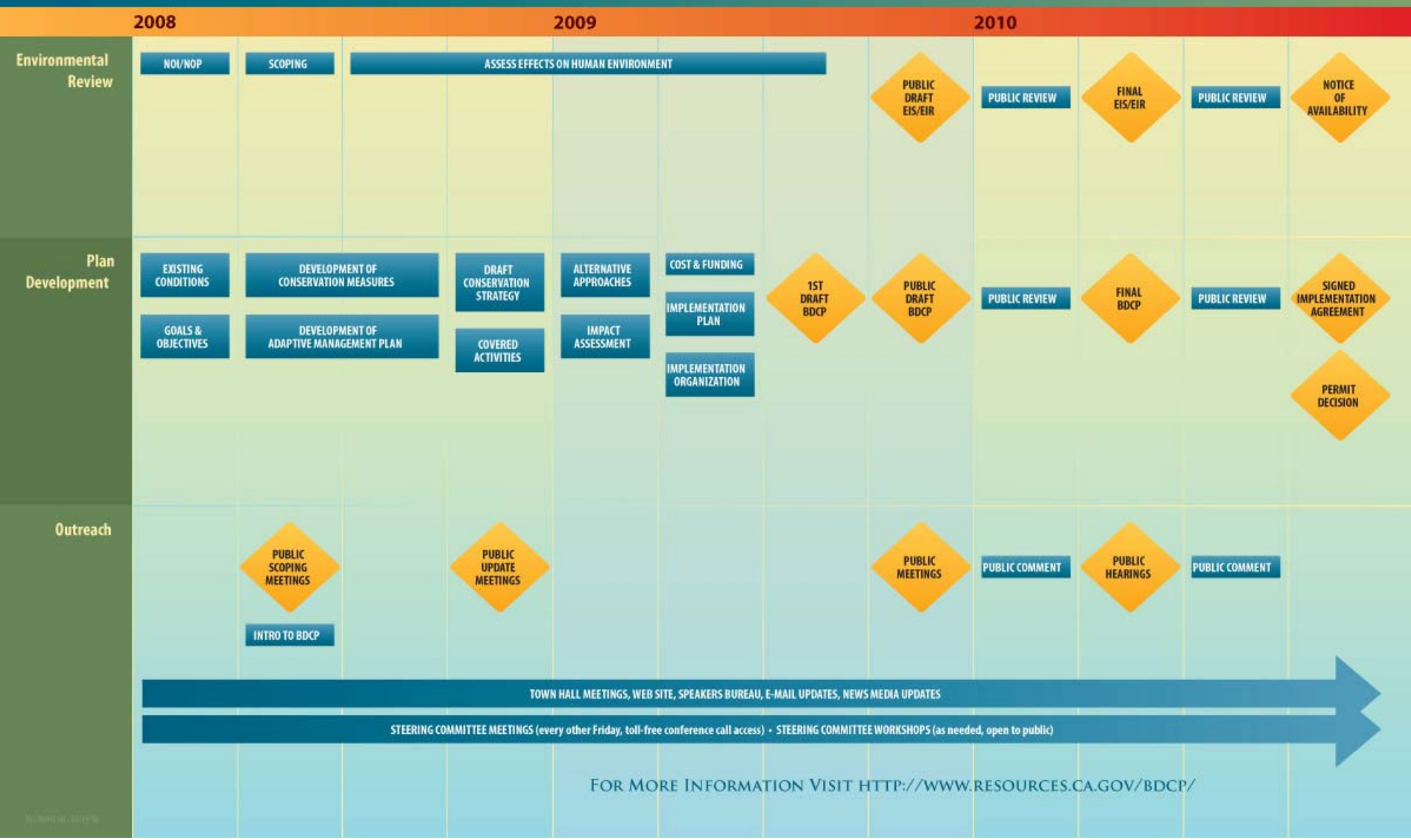

For More Information Visit http://www.resources.ca.gov/bdcp/